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Dear Carolyn,

It was great to hear from you, rather "about you" from Jeri. Yes, I'm still hanging in there and I really don't know why. When I left the hospital the last time, it was not because I was better off than when I went in. It was just that after two weeks of IV antibiotics around the clock, I realized that they had done all that could be done. I was also very demoralized by the whole experience, and felt that the best thing that I could do for myself was to get out of the hospital. Further, I have lost so much body fat that that I was beginning to get bed sores and I knew that if I was home I'd spend a lot less time in bed.

I am still very physically challenged, weight down to 125 pounds, and frequent bouts with horrendous coughing spasms that usually progress to gagging and loss of stomach contents. Diarrhea is major portion of each days activities. In spite of all that I haven't had any significant weight loss in the last month. My spirits are generally good and some days my physical energy is good.

So, most days, though it is very taxing, I am able to take care of activities of daily living with a little help with housekeeping, laundry, and carrying out the garbage. I am surrounded by a large group of very nurturing and supportive faggots and dykes. They are just wonderful to me in ways that I couldn't have predicted or imagined. One of the things that I feared most when I began to get sick (more than a year before diagnosis) was that I'd become alone and isolated. Just the opposite has happened. There is hardly a week that goes by that I am not moved to tears by the incredible thoughtfulness and kindness of someone. Sometimes it is from total strangers who say things like, "You don't know me, but you were the first public gay person I ever saw, and the things that you said on TV changed my life." Wow! What greater gift could there be.

I consider myself very fortunate. The years since diagnosis have been the best of my life. This period of time has shown me that my life's experiences have given me exactly what I need to meet the next challenge. My life has been very fulfilling and rewarding. At age 50 I feel very good about what I have done with those years, and the opportunities that I have had to learn, grow, and teach. Though I've done very little to promote my image as the "grand old man of the San Diego gay liberation movement", I get a kick out of it, and have done very little discourage it.

The Archives is my current baby and I think my life's most important contribution. I am busier now than I have ever been, and loving the work more than anything I've ever done. We will soon bring the collection together in one central location where it will be assessable to the public for education and very prideful consciousness raising. I want very badly to get the agency set up before I make my transition. So far, I think that I have done a good job of image building and establishing an aura of excellence and high quality in everything that we do. We want no part of a "that's good enough" attitude. At every opportunity I chip away at the internalized attitude that gay/lesbian folks should be content with second best. Damn it! We **are** homosexuals. Let's get meticulous about.

Carolyn, without the slightest sense of sadness, I must tell you that three

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years of illness have taken their toll. I am very tired and I very much want to get well or leave this dibilitated body behind. I am very much at peace and look forward to my transition with great anticipation. If I lived to be 100, my work would not be done (I always had trouble with deadlines). But my seeds have all been planted. Some will grow and flourish. Others will not. That is the way of the law. Having a few years to work all this out has been a blessing. I am grateful.

I want to thank you for your very newsy and exciting letter. It sounds like you are ready to take on some new challanges. Hooray for you! I admire you greatly. I wish you were closer. I thank you for being one of my teachers.

Love in the struggle,

Your brother, Jess